

What Does Torrance Have to Offer Culturally?

Newly Organized Art Group Slates Three-Day Festival

(This is the first in a series of articles dealing with Torrance's cultural activities. Has the city's cultural development kept pace with the city's rapid growth? What is being done here culturally? What is needed? The series will cover the fine arts, music, little theater work, and discussion groups. The articles will be written by Ralph R. Gompertz and Durfee Parkins.)

By RALPH R. GOMPERTZ

"Come down, come down from your ivory tower," a popular song title which is frequently applied to dreamers, college professors, and artists, is completely out of place, however, when applied to the recently organized Torrance Art group.

The principles upon which the group was organized are refreshing in their soundness, both as they apply to artists and the general public.

"We don't officially approve of any one style of painting," Mrs. Vicky Feldon, founder of the group, stated. "Our members paint as they want to — from traditional to abstract. We are only interested in encouraging good painting."

Artists, on the other hand, don't just paint for themselves, they paint for others, too. Mrs. Feldon stressed. "You don't paint for yourself alone," she said, "you want people to look at your paintings, too."

Recognizing the importance of the relationship of the artist and the public, the group is sponsoring its first three-day art festival here this week-end in order to permit area artists to display their wares and permit local residents to see what's being done here in the way of artistic expression.

HOW TO ENJOY ART

If individuals approach art properly, they can gain a great deal of enjoyment from it, Mrs. Feldon explained.

"The important thing to remember is that an artist is not a photographer," Mrs. Feldon continued. "Individuals should remember that the camera was invented to reproduce actual scenes and people. The artist, however, adds 'himself' to his painting. It is not a question of how well he reproduces nature but a question of what does he put into it of himself. Different artists try to do different things in their paintings. They range from cold abstract to the highly emotional. The sort of art an individual likes simply reflects his own personality."

Art is a special language and in order to understand art properly an individual should try to learn that language. Individuals, Mrs. Feldon suggested, should open their minds half-way and meet the artist half-way.

Mrs. Feldon started the local group in January of this year simply by writing a "letter to the editor" asking individuals who are interested in painting to contact her in order to form an art group.

Twelve individuals responded, half of whom are still with the group. At present the group consists of about a dozen active members, both men and women.

Members are mostly amateur painters, ranging from beginners to those with professional school training. Not only is the group free of identification with any school of art,



THE HALF-WAY MEETING

Mrs. Vicky Feldon, head of the Torrance Art Group, believes that the artist and the public should make an attempt to meet each other half-way.—Press Photo.

but it places no restrictions either on the medium in which any of the members wish to express themselves. Consequently, different individuals specialize in oil, water color, casein paint, ceramics, silk screening, sculpture (in wood) and copper etching.

MEETINGS

The group, which recently became a part of the Torrance Recreation Department, meets the first Friday of every month at McMaster Park on 174th st. near Yukon.

There's just one requirement—every member must bring in a new project which he has started since the last meeting, whether it is completed or not. The evening is then given over to group discussion and criticism.

Mrs. Feldon, who, together with her husband, Milton, and their three children, Fred, 8, Francis, 4, and Ruth, 2, came here from Akron, Ohio, finds Torrance a wonderful place in which to live.

The Feldons had not planned to settle in Torrance at all. They happened to pass through the city, liked it so much, and within three days bought a home here at 815 Fonthill. Mrs. Feldon's husband works in research at Shell Chemical.

Mrs. Feldon hopes that through the efforts of her group, individuals with artistic interests will find an outlet and that the life of the community will be enriched.

While some individuals find satisfaction in just painting for a hobby, others feel compelled to dedicate their whole life to painting, subordinating everything else to this one calling. Yet there is one thing that all who have ever held a paint brush hold in common—the desire to interpret what they have seen and felt so that others may see and feel.

(NEXT WEEK: The Little Theater Movement in Torrance by Durfee Parkins.)

PANELISTS TO DISCUSS ART FRIDAY

Carrying out the theme of "Art to Live With," the Art Festival in Torrance will open with a panel discussion, Friday, November 16, 8-10 p.m., on "Can You Live with Contemporary Art?" It will take place at the Benstead plunge, 3331 Torrance blvd.

Speaking for the artists will be Ben Shaw, 3214 Crickwood. He has studied at the Art Center school in Los Angeles, worked as a sketch artist for Universal studios, exhibited at the Orange County fair, Los Angeles County Museum, Pasadena museum, De Young museum, San Francisco, and the Palos Verdes gallery. He is also a member of the California Water-Color society.

The other artist on the panel will be Mrs. Enid Helvey, 4403 Newton st. She received a BA and MA in art education at the Chicago Art Institute and has taught in Arizona, Santa Barbara college, Los Angeles State college, and the South Bay Adult school. Mrs. Helvey has exhibited at the Santa Barbara museum and is a member and exhibiting artist with the South Bay Community Arts association of which she was a former member of their board of directors. She is also a life member of Delta Phi Delta, honorary art fraternity.

Mrs. Herma Tillm, 16914 Osage ave., will speak for the public. She is chairman of the Recreation commission, director of the Torrance Personnel agency and active in Torrance community affairs.

Also representing the layman's viewpoint will be John K. Kesson, 2015 W. 182nd st., president of the North Torrance Civic Improvement association, associated with the Kesson Oil Producing company and prom-

Art Show Set By South Bay Associa

The South Bay Community Arts association will hold its annual show in participating members only, at the Hermosa Biltmore hotel, in Hermosa Beach, Friday, November 30 at 8:30 p.m.

It will be open to the public, and feature Painting, Sculpture, and Ceramics and Jewelry. Prizes for each of the groups will be announced at a later date.

Feature of the evening will be the presentation of awards, and a drawing for a lovely seascape oil painting by Dale Kingsley Ash, prominent southland artist. Donation tickets for this drawing may be obtained by contacting members of the association.

The show will also be open Saturday and Sunday, December 1 and 2 from 1-5 p.m.

Anyone interested in joining the association may enter his work in this show by calling FR. 4-8437 or FR. 4-5277.

LAS FIESTADORES WILL DANCE

On Saturday, November 17, the Las Fiestadores dance group is having a dance at the Hacienda club, San Pedro. Each member is asked to bring a guest. Host and hostess are Mr. and Mrs. Earl Clayton, Mr. and Mrs. Bob Clayton, Mr. and Mrs. R. R. Dexter and Dr. and Mrs. Burt Easley are on the committee.

A pre-dance party will be held at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Easley, 3306 El Dorado at 8:15 p.m. All members and guests are invited.

Information in Torrance civic affairs. Donald Mansfield, 3226 Antonio, assistant city manager, will act as moderator for the discussion. Coffee will be served after the panelists finish their informative discussion.

Art Festival: Schedule Of Events

LOCATION: Torrance (Benstead) swimming pool shelter house on new civic center (3331 Torrance blvd. near Madrona).

DATE: Friday, November 16 through Sunday, November 18.

EVENT: Artists of the area will have a chance to display their works and the public will have an opportunity to view them. All works must be original. Oils must be framed, water colors matted. Entries must be wired for hanging and brought to the pool shelter house on Thursday, November 15, between 6 and 9 p.m. Three major divisions include painting, sculpture and crafts.

FRIDAY: Panel talk, "Can You Live with Modern Art," awards and public exhibit, 8-10 p.m.

SATURDAY: Exhibit 2-6 p.m.; art films, 4-6 p.m.

SUNDAY: Exhibit, 2-6 p.m.; art films, 4-6 p.m.; art demonstration, 6-8 p.m.

ART FILMS to be shown include: "What is Modern Art?," "Grandma Moses," "Rome," and "Art Survives the Times."

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Doctor Attends 3 Day Conference In Palm Springs

Dr. George O. Peeke has just returned from a three day meeting of the Pacific Coast Fertility society held at the El Mirador hotel, Palm Springs, November 8-11. Representatives from the entire Pacific coast were present.

Dr. Peeke also attended some of the Western Week activities and was guest at the Racket club.

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